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JANUARY 2015

RAISING HOPE

Q&A WITH RAISING READERS
VOLUNTEER JANE HALIBURTON

THE WANDERERS

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Editor
Margo Niemeyer

Contributors
NICOLE ARNOLD
TODD BURRAS
JANE M. DEGENEFFE
MARY CLARE LOKKEN
KAREN PETERSEN
KECIA PLACE-FENCL
JAN RIGGENBACH
KAREN SCHWALLER

Photographers
JANE M. DEGENEFFE
NIRMALENDU MAJUMDAR
KECIA PLACE-FENCL



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Tribune Editor
MICHAEL CRUMB
Publisher
PAUL HEIDBREDER

ADVERTISERS

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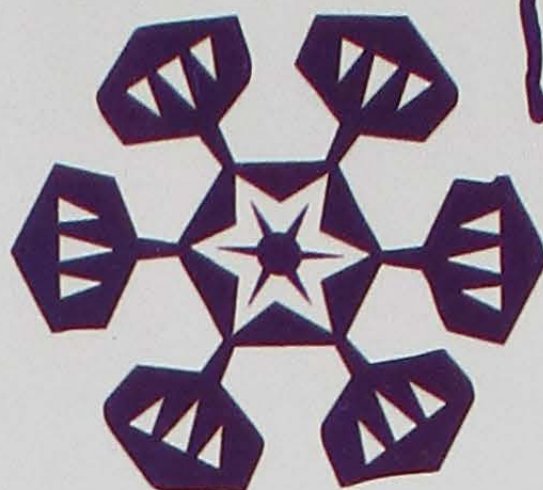
PHONE
(515) 663-6923

ADDRESS
317 Fifth St. Ames, IA, 50010

EMAIL
mniemeyer@amestrib.com

ONLINE
[www.amestrib.com/sections/
special-sections/facets](http://www.amestrib.com/sections/special-sections/facets)

ON THE COVER: Jane Halibur-
ton, one of the founding mem-
bers of Raising Readers of Story
Co. answers questions about the
program. Contributed photo by
Jane M. Degeneffe.



Winter is here!

As the days get shorter and bitter cold, people tend to start hibernating. They go out in the cold only when needed. They sleep or nap more often (I know I do), there is less overall movement happening. Maybe there is a little post-holiday weight gain. There is a potential for us to get grumpy, sad, mellow. Blah, for lack of a better word.

Growing up in South Dakota, I know how hard it is to go outside with the howling winds and icy air.

Just the thought of putting on the winter combat suit is tiring, and surrendering starts to sound appealing. You have your basic first layer of long johns, then insulated jeans and a sweatshirt. Three pairs of socks and arctic weather-proof snow boots, a wool coat that covers you nose to knees. Ear warmers, stocking cap, hood and scarf. Two layers of those dollar knit gloves under a pair of waterproof mittens. All this to shovel the walk to the car or to trek down to the mailbox. OK, I tend to exaggerate. Although, there are days when it feels just short of a grand feat to get the simple, everyday things done during a Midwest winter.

We end up telling ourselves that whatever we had planned or needed to do can wait because it is too cold. Old Man Winter wins this round, let's try again tomorrow. This issue focuses on what we can do to lighten up the dark winter days.

My personal suggestion to fight the hibernation urge is to curl up in front of a fire or with a blanket; have a cup of your favorite warm beverage on standby; and a good book, movie or your latest knitting project. But that seems to help the cycle rather than break it.

Not to fear, our writers have come up with so many great suggestions to keep you active, healthy and happy this winter. You don't even have to leave the house for some of them

Cross your fingers for a good winter snow to water the fields this spring and stay warm out there!



JANUARY 2015 CONTENTS

FEATURES



6 | THE WANDERERS

Get some ideas from a group of friends on how to beat the cold and stay active.



11 | RAISING HOPE

Jane Haliburton, one of the program founders, talks about Raising Readers.

DEPARTMENTS

9 | STYLE

Paint's 2015 color palettes have an Impressionistic glow

18 | Family

Karen Schwaller tells her story of when the lights went out and circumstances reminded her how special her family is.

20 | TRAVEL

While vacationing in Hawaii, take full advantage of all the unique experiences the islands have to offer.

22 | CULTIVATE

Gardening isn't just for outside or summertime. Jan lends an encouraging hand to indoor gardening.



24 | BEAUTIFY

Mary Clare gives a sneak peak on spring and summer trends for 2015.

25 | PROVIDE

How to teach your kids to be responsible with their own money and finance practices to remember.

26 | SAVOR

A tasty looking chicken piccata recipe, complete with wine suggestion.

28 | FITNESS

Kecia suggests ways to stay active this winter.

29 | NUTRITION

Top food trends for 2015 include flavor, nutrition and apps to help you stay educated.

30 | FATCETED WOMAN

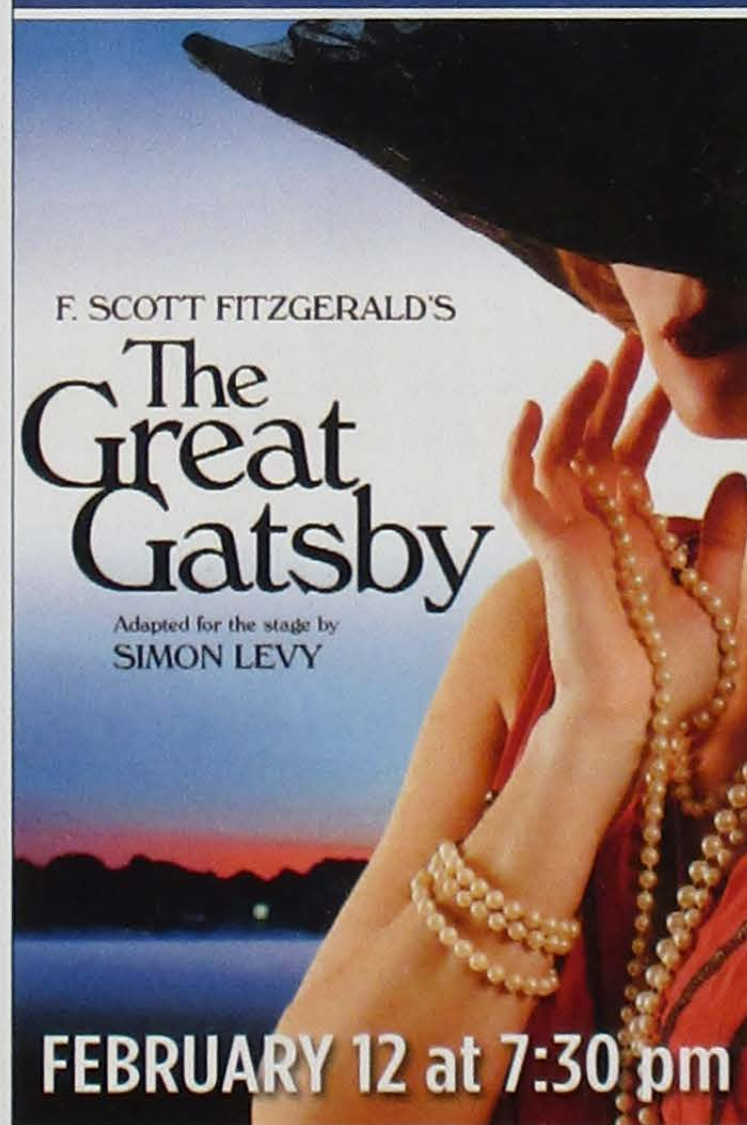
Get to know Margo Niemeyer, a recent addition to the Ames Tribune team.

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The Wanderers

BY TODD BURRAS, Contributing writer



(FROM LEFT) EILEEN TRAMP, SYLVA WILLIAMS, BARB BURNHAM, JUDY STEHR AND JOYCE VEGGE POSE AT NORTH GRAND CHURCH. PHOTO BY NIRMALENDU MAJUMDAR/AMES TRIBUNE

Putting the sunshine in a winter day

Winter. The days are shorter; the nights longer. Cold kicks out warmth, and the wind blows, sometimes seemingly incessantly. Gray, brown and often white are the dominant colors of the outdoors.

Let's face it, unless you spend a portion or the entirety of the winter somewhere in the South — Texas, Arizona or Florida are the familiar destinations for most Midwestern snowbirds — getting through an Iowa winter can, at times, be a physical and mental test of stamina, fortitude and endurance.

A group of Ames women, however, have found various ways to deal with what can become the winter doldrums. Members of the Iowa State University Women's Club, Eileen Tramp, Sylva Williams, Joyce Vegge, Judy Stehr and Barb Burnham have formed a group called the Wanderers. Among other

things, the five ladies get together at least once a month for a short getaway from Ames.

"We found out we like road trips, like to explore small towns in Iowa and shop in unique boutiques, which are typically found on their Main Street," Tramp said. "We kind of take turns planning our outing, and we start with a general plan but are flexible and will stop on a whim along the way if something catches our eye."

Weather permitting, in January the group will head north to Mason City, which, as Vegge said, "has a lot to keep you busy."

"We can tour the Historic Park Inn, a newly renovated hotel designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, explore the MacNider Art Museum and tour Music Man Square and Meredith Wilson's home if time permits, as we would fit in lunch and a little shopping."

In February, Vegge said the group is considering a trip to Iowa City and an overnight stay at the Brown Street Inn Bed and Breakfast.

"The Hoover Library is just down the road, Fireside Winery is always a nice stop, and it would be fun to take in the Peking Acrobats, who will be at the Englert Theatre," she said. "The pedestrian mall in Iowa City has some fun shops and good places to dine, and we will probably stop at the Tanger Mall on the way home to check out the clearance sales."

As you'll find out, these busy women have a lot more going on than just a monthly outing to help them get through the coldest, darkest season of the year. Here, in their words, are how they keep their spirits up and their outlook positive not only in the depths of winter but each day throughout the year.

If you don't go South and stay put, winters in Iowa tend to be dark, cold, gloomy and long. How does being a member of the Wanderers help bring a little "sunshine" to your winter?

JOYCE VEGGE: None of us go away in the winter for more than a month but we all stay pretty busy to the point where it is sometimes difficult to find a date when everyone is available for one of our adventures. Between serving on community boards of directors, volunteering in various organizations, playing bridge, reading books for monthly book clubs, attending regular fitness classes at Ames Racquet and Fitness, spending time with grandchildren and attending small group activities in the ISU Women's Club our days are quite full and so winter goes pretty quickly (except last winter). We always look forward to the next Wanderers adventure and sometimes some of the fun is in the planning.

EILEEN TRAMP: Being a member of the Wanderers is a great experience all year long.

But, in the winter, trips with these fun-loving Wanderers puts sunshine in a day. We are all so compatible and enjoy each other's company. We chat and laugh and tell fun stories in the car to and from our destination. We always find fun things to do and enjoy doing it together. Planning the next trip is always a lot of fun and something to look forward to as it is different and a unique experience each time.

JUDY STEHR: Sunshine is in each and every one of these women. They are each unique and have great personalities. We love to chat, laugh and tell stories about our lives as we drive to our destination. Of course we always have to stop and get a cup of coffee. Each trip is a new experience, which brings sunshine into our lives.

What other things do you do by yourself and/or with family and friends to help beat the winter "blahs"?

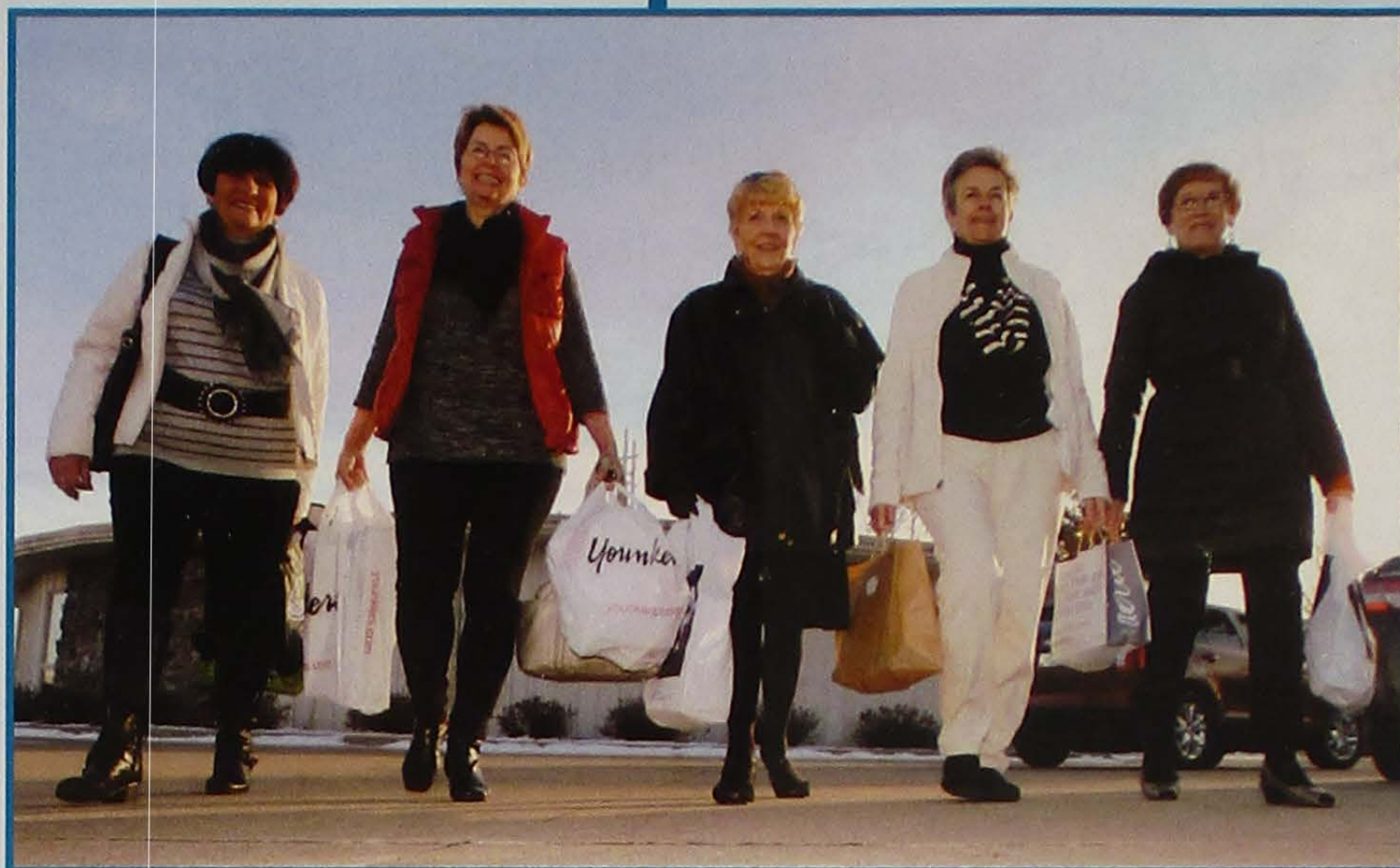
JUDY STEHR: I love winter so I really don't think of it as blah. I look forward to each day as a new adventure. I love to be with my grandchildren and family. They keep me young with all their activities. I also keep very involved with volunteering, the Wanderers, ISU Women's Club, Lions, couples club, PEO, church activities and going to the gym each day. I am very blessed with a beautiful family, good friends and good health. What more can you ask for?

SYLVA WILLIAMS: We are very involved with our church and are avid volunteers in

other organizations. So I don't let winter get me down. I am in several groups. I don't turn down opportunities just because of the weather. However, I do occasionally like to curl up with a good book. Our children are both in Iowa so we get together with them when possible.

JOYCE VEGGE: We attend ISU men's and women's basketball games, ISU women's volleyball games, take an OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) class (at ISU) or go cross-country skiing.

WANDERERS, page 8



(FROM LEFT)
EILEEN TRAMP,
BARB BURNHAM,
SYLVA WILLIAMS,
JOYCE VEGGE
AND JUDY
STEHRS POSE AT
NORTH GRAND
CHURCH. PHOTO
BY NIRMALENDU
MAJUMDAR/
AMES TRIBUNE

WANDERERS, Continued from page 7

What advice do you have for other women to help combat the winter doldrums?

EILEEN TRAMP: I think winter is about attitude. Personally, I love winter as I love each season in the Midwest. That's why we live here in the Midwest. We need to keep busy regardless of the season and always remember that we are lucky to be alive — warm or cold, north or south. It's a wonderful life.

JUDY STEHR: Look at the bright side of life. My advice is to keep busy. If you can't get out, take up a hobby or set a goal for the day. Reading is always good. Just be happy to be alive and that you get to enjoy Iowa with the changing of the seasons. Life is precious so enjoy each and every day.

SYLVA WILLIAMS: Get out and get moving. I start most every day at the gym and then usually off to whatever is on my agenda for the day.

JOYCE VEGGE: Even though winter can get old, living in the Midwest gives you the opportunity to experience all four seasons. Enjoy it.

Anything else you'd like to add?

JOYCE VEGGE: I feel that winter in Iowa is about attitude. You can moan about the cold, snow, shoveling and long for summer and warmer weather or you can embrace the opportunity to slow down your pace a bit. I remember when I was working full time, waking up to listen to the news to see if ISU had closed because of the weather. Didn't we all enjoy curling up with a book and staying in our PJs all day because we were enjoying a "snow day?"

EILEEN TRAMP: Our sons always used to ask, "Why do you go so much?" And I would say because I can. The important thing is I also "go" because I think being active always keeps you positive. I enjoy people and especially meeting new people. But there are always those people that come into your life and put footprints on your heart — they are my forever friends.

Laughter and fun in life are the key to staying positive in good times and in the not-so-good times and even cold wintery days. Family will always be important, but they have their lives, so we must continue to make our lives meaningful. So friends are important, doing things with friends have always been an important part of my life. I believe that friends are God's way of taking care of us. Activities keep us happy and positive and so let it snow, let it snow, let it snow.

Paint's 2015 color palettes have an Impressionistic glow

BY ROSA COLUCCI
Tribune News Service

Color forecasts for 2015 look a little like the palettes of impressionist painters Monet, Renoir or Van Gogh.

Most paint companies have released their color of the year collections. They usually choose four themes to reflect the trends and then pull one standout color as the star. Pantone, which chooses colorways for products beyond paint, has called its 2015 fashion color report "En Plein Air," referring to outdoor painting with a range of "understated brights, pale pastels and tropical landscapes."

The Sherwin-Williams palettes cross the spectrum from the muted, colorful neutrals of the Chrysalis palette to the bold, carnival shades of Unrestrained. The company's color of the year is Coral Reef (SW 6606), a shade that Jackie Jordan, director of color marketing, says "has a great floral component in it. It's not too red, not too orange, right in the middle and just creates a buoyant mood."

The company's press materials show splashy peonies, painted shabby chic furniture and a modern backdrop for lime green art.

"Possibilities Trends" is the theme behind the four new palettes at PPG Paints and Architectural Coatings. The company's color experts chose Blue Paisley (PPG-1238-6), a crisp, saturated blue, as its color of the year.

"We have had a really great response to the shade," said Dee Schlotter, PPG color brand manager. "It is very optimistic and points to a new horizon. It is a serious, mature and positive blue, not like the baby blues of the past."

Blue Paisley is part of the Co-leidoscope palette, based on world trends and travels. It coordinates with Mother of Pearl, Bone White and a fun yellow called Curry Sauce.

The Good Life palette from PPG pulls from the harmony of the coastal regions.



PAINT, page 10

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STYLE

PAINT, Continued from page 9

**Whatever
direction
you
choose,
don't be
afraid
to stroke
on some
color. It's
almost as
much fun
as picking
spring
flowers.**

Fresh flowers and earthy browns hint of the sea in shades such as Oatmeal, Burnt Red, Holland Tile and Malibu Done. They work well with natural textures ranging from wicker to braided leather. Other palettes in the collection include the modern I'm Pulse, featuring urban neutrals paired with brights, and Introsense, which blends nature and technology with shades such as Antique White and Onyx.

Of course, there has to be somewhere for the eye to rest in this color bouquet. The Paint Quality Institute is naming gray as the winner over white for the second year in a row.

"This is the first time any color has headlined our forecast in back-to-back years," says color expert Debbie Zimmer. "But gray, a near-perfect neutral color, has really caught on."

Benjamin Moore never disappoints with its color of the year. This year, it's Guilford Green (HC-116), a stunning silvery green that changes with the light. Reminiscent of the perennial plant known as lamb's ear, it pairs well with just about everything and adds freshness. Press materials show it on the ceiling with walls painted in Universal Black to great effect. The Benjamin Moore palette also includes Caponata (AF-650) and Portland Gray (2109-60) as dark anchors.

Dutch Boy paints has unleashed a much darker side of blue in Coal Blue (E16-1). Reminiscent of Pennsylvania blue slate, it becomes a neutral backdrop when paired with light tans, pale

blues and even mustard yellow. Other shades in the collection include Faintest Idea (F-25-4), a pale lavender that pairs well with varying shades of blue from turquoise to pale blue; and Biloxi Blues (E-17-2), a cornflower blue that is friendly with Loden Woo, a basil pesto green, and Ashton Orange.

Behr's collection focuses on saturated colors paired with neutrals, including Essential Teal (T15-3) from the Deep Dreams palette. They've also released a Frosted Pastels palette of Dreamscape Gray, Secret Blush, Elusive Blue and Dandelion Tea. Pop art takes center stage in the Social Brights collection, while Nuanced Neutrals wash ashore in Blue Clay, Mocha Foam and Snap Pea Green.

Last but not least is premium paint Farrow & Ball. The British company known for amazing front door paint has released four key colors for 2015 — Breakfast Room Green, Light Blue, Pink Ground and Tanner's Brown. Neutral and saturated, they evoke a spring bouquet in the softest sense.

The trick to using all of these shades is getting to the undertones in them. Every shade has a warm, cool or neutral undertone, and it is wise to consult with the color cards each company provides to find its complement. This is especially important when painting a kitchen, where cabinetry can throw off color.

Whatever direction you choose, don't be afraid to stroke on some color. It's almost as much fun as picking spring flowers.

Raising Hope

BY JANE MARIE DEGENEFFE
Contributing writer

“We make a living by what we get.
We make a life by what we give.”
— *Winston S. Churchill*

It's true. When a child looks up into your face to ask a question or tell of some wonder they've observed, you are really never quite the same. There is that integral moment when something changes inside of you and you realize again that you are not just the caretaker of your own offspring. Eyes that beg for sincerity and trust, guidance and hope, look up into yours and suddenly you want to continue to do more in life to fuel that wonder with the fire of knowledge.

A well respected platform for many who bring such hope are the volunteers of Raising Readers of Story County, a literacy program with the mission: “to improve language and literacy development in children from birth to age 8, and to nurture healthy parent-child relationships”

This program's success belongs to a community of people who like-mindedly believed in putting books into the hands of children, as well as bringing great moments of interaction through literature.



HOPE, Continued from page 11

One of the founding members of Raising Readers of Story Co. is Jane Haliburton of Ames who served on the Story County Board of Supervisors for 24 years. She continues to be very active in the lives of many within her community. Her training in early childhood education was the thruway back to her intense involvement with Raising Readers. She graduated from ISU in 1965 and had been involved with the very onset of Head Start programs here in this area. Jane did her student teaching at Edwards Elementary School and taught from 1965-1969 at Roosevelt Elementary School; then becoming a permanent substitute teacher at Sawyer from 1970-1971. Her husband was drafted at this time and they moved briefly to Columbia, Ga. before she became a stay-at-home mom. Jane also worked part-time for a couple of years as an administrative assistant for a small engineering company in Gilbert, Iowa, before running for the office of County Supervisor in 1987. Talking with Jane, it is clear that she is a natural administrator, exceptionally gifted in organizing people and definitely has not retired from service to her community.

Enthusiastic about learning, Jane Haliburton is an inspiration to those who hear her report about the continued growth of Raising Readers as an influential

organization. She believes that even though the word is sometimes over-used, "empowerment" is the epitome of what occurs during these reading sessions.

Q: Is Raising Readers a nationwide organization? How did you learn about it?

A: "Raising Readers is a local nonprofit organization in Story County. It is affiliated with the national and Iowa Reach Out and Read (ROR). I first learned about it through Carolyn Jons."

According to the history found online, Christie Vilsack initiated Iowa Stories in 2000 and Raising Readers developed from this project. Ames was selected as one of seven pilot communities to incorporate Iowa Stories. 2014 marks 10 years of Raising Readers with much support from the community of Story County. Jane explains, with the ease of the talented administrator that she is, just how funding is derived through ASSET (Analysis Social Services Evaluating Team). It isn't an easy process and Raising Readers has earned the respect of coordinating groups and has become a more structured organization.

This coordinated funding comes through the City of Ames, Story County, ISU student government, State Dept. of Human Services and United Way.



JANE HALIBURTON, ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF RAISING READERS. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Q: How long has Raising Readers been in this community?

A: "Carolyn's morning Rotary group actually began the first book distribution project in 2003, however, Raising Readers developed as an organization later. (There's a great history on the RR website: www.raising-readers.org) Raising Readers and McFarland Clinic established the first Reach Out and Read site in Story County in 2006. Story County was recognized with a Book End County Community Award in 2009 for having 100 percent participation by primary care medical providers."

Carolyn Jons served as Vice

President of Raising Readers and reports the benefits of having books available to children during their well-child checkups as a healthy proactive way to continue the care of children. Sometimes it is possible to situate volunteers to be at the clinic to read to children there. Otherwise, the program offers a variety of ways for people to become involved as a volunteer. Giving their time to reading one on one, or to a group of children as a classroom teacher dictates an allotted time. Generally, a volunteer chooses which group to belong to, whether it be at a clinic or in a classroom. This year the Harrison Barnes Reading Academy meets once a week for one hour at the Ames Library.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Q : I understand that there are other counties in Iowa that do not have the Raising Readers as a part of their volunteer opportunities. Is there a way in which to bring this to other communities? Or invite them into involvement?

A : "While Raising Readers hasn't been exactly duplicated in other counties as a volunteer organization, it has certainly been recognized as an outstanding example of promoting early literacy. Looking at just the ROR piece of it, there are over 100 programs in Iowa which distribute more than 96,000 books annually."

Q : What have you observed personally that has shown over time that this is a successful program?

A : "It's been fascinating to watch the growth and impact of Raising Readers over the past few years! Just a few examples from throughout Story County: currently have over 7000

volunteer hours to date this year, over 6000 books distributed, at least 24 reading corners, additional tutoring and mentoring programs, stronger partnerships and collaborations with other community groups, etc."

Q : Are there any stories that have filtered back over the years? Say, parents who may have commented on the involvement of Raising Readers in their child's life? Or children who recognize and acknowledge their previous tutor in a grocery store or at a parade or community event?

A : "Definitely!"

Q : How do you see Raising Readers affect the community?

A : "In a variety of positive ways from the increasing numbers of volunteers and participants to the growing family activities and improved readiness skills seen in schools."

Recently, at the Harrison Barnes Reading Academy I asked a young mom, Shellie Wilson, how she has viewed the involvement of her 7 year old daughter. Her daughter is autistic and struggles with stuttering. Shellie shares, "This program has been a huge opportunity for her to gain practice, courage, and the strength to know that she is confident in how she handles her reading. She can tell me what the story is. With this extra practice she has been able to go forward. It's a huge help!"

Q : Could Raising Readers also be entitled Raising Hope? Has there been a level of uplifting attitudes amidst the volunteers? Do they recognize how they too are benefited by getting out and touching others lives?

A : "Yes, and that's just one example!"

HOPE, page 14

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VOLUNTEER

HOPE, Continued from page 13

Here is a wonderful list of the benefits of getting out of the house and getting out into the community. Chase away the winter doldrums and "make a life by what you give." The list was obtained online from the University of California, San Diego. The page was put up to encourage students to become involved. People of all ages can become volunteers!

It is not too late to begin giving.

Ten Reasons to Volunteer

10: It's good for you.

Volunteering provides physical and mental rewards.

Reduces stress: Experts report that when you focus on someone other than yourself, it interrupts usual tension-producing patterns.

Makes you healthier: Moods and emotions, like optimism, joy, and control over one's fate, strengthen the immune system.

9: It saves resources.

Volunteering provides

valuable community services so more money can be spent on local improvements.

The estimated value of a volunteer's time is \$15.39 per hour.

8: Volunteers gain professional experience.

You can test out a career.

7: It brings people together.

As a volunteer you assist in:

- Uniting people from diverse backgrounds to work toward a common goal

- Building camaraderie and teamwork

6: It promotes personal growth and self esteem.

Understanding community needs helps foster empathy and self-efficacy.

5: Volunteering strengthens your community.

As a volunteer you help:

- Support families (daycare and eldercare)

- Improve schools (tutoring, literacy)

- Support youth (mentoring and after-school programs)

- Beautify the community (beach and park cleanups)

4: You learn a lot.

Volunteers learn about:

- Self: Volunteers discover hidden talents that may change your view on your

self worth.

- Government: Through working with local non-profit agencies, volunteers learn about the functions and operation of our government.

- Community: Volunteers gain knowledge of local resources available to solve community needs.

3: You get a chance to give back.

People like to support community resources that they use themselves or that benefit people they care about.

2: Volunteering encourages civic responsibility.

Community service and volunteerism are an investment in our community and the people who live in it.

1: You make a difference.

Every person counts!

From the website: <http://www.raising-readers.org/>

"Raising Readers in Story County welcomes committed volunteers to contribute their time, talents and resources to help achieve our mission of increasing early language and literacy in young children."

Raising Readers provides training and support for volunteers. Volunteer opportunities are available for one-time events, short term and long term."



Mom needs help 4-year-old jealous of baby sister

BY MEGHAN LEAHY
Special to The Washington Post

Q: We have a 4-year-old daughter and a 3-month-old daughter. Our 4-year-old has been throwing major tantrums recently. We totally get that she is feeling jealous/insecure, and we talk things over when everyone calms down. However, her anger has resulted in her hitting us and throwing things. My question is: How do you suggest dealing with a tantrum when a child is doing harm to people or things? Often she will do this while I'm holding the baby. (Shocker.) When my husband is home we can divide and conquer, but when I'm on my own I don't have a plan.

A: Oh, this is so hard. First of all, you are tired. (You have a new baby in the house.) Second of all, it is hard to maintain patience when objects are whizzing by your head and shattering behind you. So, you have my full empathy.

Let's take a look at what is happening here with little Susie (the 4-year-old) developmentally and brain-wise.

Without the added threat of having a cute little sister come in and take up space and take Mom away, being 4 is already a pretty rough gig.

At this age, children can begin to express themselves pretty well, use some sophisticated turns of phrase and occasionally use some rational thinking — and then, POOF!, they are on the floor, a crying mess, over something seemingly meaningless. Being a parent of a 4-year-old means having perpetual whiplash as you ride the wave of emotions your little one is bringing you daily.

Susie is already having some pretty big emotions (hence the object-throwing), and now we have added baby sis into the picture.

In terms of how a 4-year-old is connected to her caretakers, that is intense,

too. Susie has had Mama all to herself for almost four full years. That is a long time in child world. A whole lifetime, in fact. Your attention, literally, has been all on her, and now you are distracted, tired and taking care of another child.

Conventional advice always has you attending to Susie over the baby (yes, sure, go ahead and do that) and allowing Susie to help whenever she can (and yes again, do this).

But the hard, cold reality here is that Susie is going to cry some as she adapts to the changes of the family. And you know what? There is nothing wrong with that. This is life. Humans are designed to run into hard situations and do one of two things: Change them or adapt to them.

Susie is going to adapt to baby sister (with your help).

This explosive anger is a sign of a great deal of frustration. Frustration is the basic emotion that all mammals feel when things are not working for them. Susie is frustrated at the aspect of sharing you when she never had to before.

The emotions build and build, and then they erupt in a 4-year-old manner: violently.

So begin by keeping an eye out for what is leading up to the explosion. Is it when the baby cries? Is it when you need to feed the baby? Is it when the baby needs her diaper changed? And can you involve or distract Susie? Sometimes, those two tricks easily work.

But other times Susie is going to have a huge fit. There is no stopping it. In that case, you need to make it as safe as you can for Susie, the baby and you. Absolutely, take away dangerous items and instead populate the floor with soft, squishy balls that could not hurt a fly. Say, "Man, Susie, you must be SO sick of this baby. Me, too! Let's throw these balls!" And go ahead and have at it. Let all this aggression out (it has to go somewhere) in a way that doesn't make Susie dangerous or feel like a bad kid.

As well as allowing the throwing, see what happens when you mirror her feelings back to her. If you feel she is in a place to hear it, you can say, "Oh, man, this baby cries so much, doesn't she? Cry, cry, cry ... geez!" Go ahead and come alongside Susie and her frustration. Parents will worry that this will build a bad attitude, but the opposite happens. Susie feels as though Mom is on her side and relaxes. The stress lessens. You can even smile and laugh together.

Finally, let me remind you of something that should bring you some measure of comfort: For thousands of years, humans have lived in close communities, where a mother's mom, sister and cousins would help her. Someone would be around to grab a baby, help a 4-year-old, bring a meal, wipe a bum, play with a child. We are largely alone now, and we are not meant to be that way.

You need someone else to come in and give you a helping hand. Is there someone who can come in and take the baby out of your hands? Give you a break and allow some special time for you and Susie? A library visit? A walk to the park?

By widening the circle of support, you are opening space to physically and emotionally handle this time of family transition.

Whatever you do, I beg you to not begin timeouts or other punitive tactics. These (even if they work in the beginning) will increase power struggles and, more important, communicate the idea that there is something wrong with frustration.

There isn't.

You can peacefully guide your child to appropriate forms of frustration-outlet while keeping yourself and the baby safe.

So give Susie some extra love and warmth, allow her to cry and feel her feelings, come alongside her emotions by agreeing with her, and give her safe ways to express her frustration.

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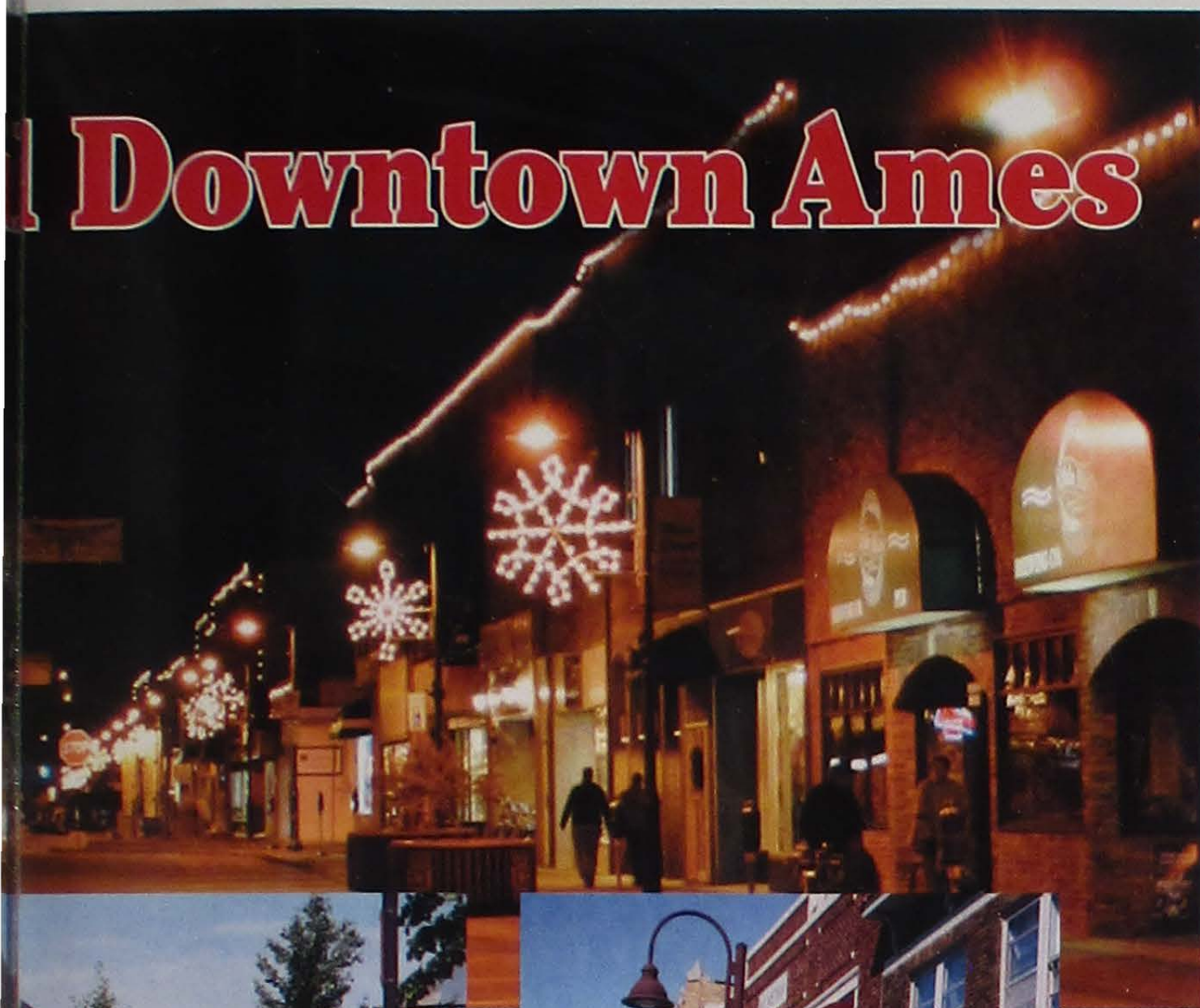
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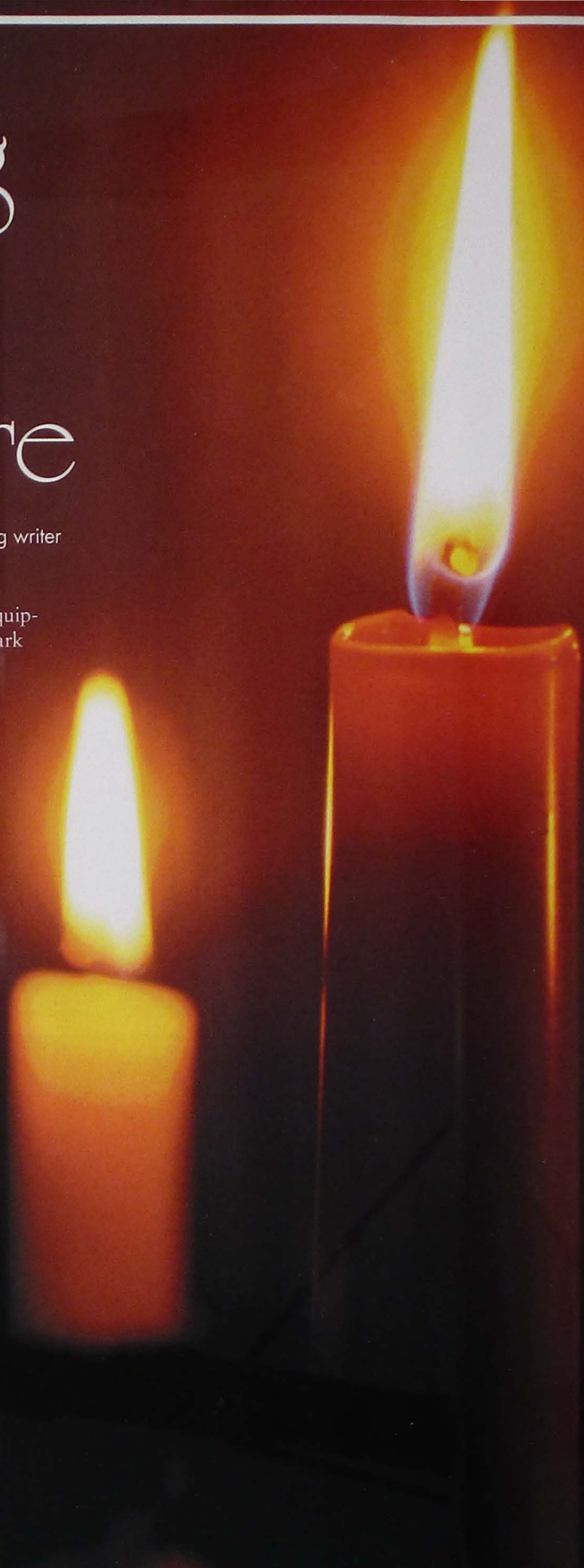
BY KAREN SCHWALLER, Contributing writer

When the combines and tillage equipment shifted into permanent park mode this fall, it came just in time for winter to set in. With harvest starting so late, the snow and freezing temperatures arrived the day after our guys fell comatose from an entire week of running the disk ripper literally around the clock, trying to beat Old Man Winter to the starting line.

It was a victory, though perhaps only a hollow one — with winter as our prize.

But as ironic as it sounds, it's sometimes those cold winter winds that bring us some of our best family memories. I'm not talking about the cutting of wood to stoke the wood stove, family ski trips or afternoons when the kids go outside to build forts in the snow — though those memories are priceless. I'm talking about those cold winter winds that zap our power lines and help us realize how helpless we are without electricity and without each other.

I remember once when I was working at a small-town newspaper. An ice storm had ravaged the area and left us without power. I had been out getting some pictures on that cold, dark morning for the front page and when I returned to the office I flipped on the light switch, but no lights. Oh yea — no power. So I traipsed to the bathroom to take care of a little business, and when I got in



Though at first it seemed unproductive and annoying to have to stop my life and wait for the power to come back on, after a while it was kind of nice to have a reason to stop and relax, to have everyone together — wrapped in blankets as the house cooled off, in the shadowy light of candles and flashlights, with nothing to do but be a family. Stories would be shared as shadows flickered, laughter would ensue, real talking would be done and bonding was happening whether we realized it or not.

there I flipped the switch again — oh yeah, no power. Some things just aren't going to wait so I finished up my business in the dark and went back to my desk, where I thought I would hear what they were saying on the radio about the storm. Once again, no power. After that I thought I may as well get started writing the story about the storm, so I sat down and pushed the switch to turn on my electric typewriter.

I had to have been one of the first known and youngest local Alzheimers cases.

I hadn't realized how dependent my life was on electricity.

I also think about times when the power goes out on those long winter days at home. When we had young children around, it used to be a mixed-emotion thing when the power went out in the evening. It never happened at a time that was convenient, but once I got over that, we would all gather around with any flashlights that actually worked and some candles and blankets. Everyone could have been bickering up until the minute the power went out, but once the darkness fell over us and everything was eerily silent, everyone came together — maybe a little spooked by such saturating darkness, and being glad we all had each other.

It would always take me a few minutes to wrap my head around the fact that I had to stop what I was doing and readjust to the situation.

Though at first it seemed unproductive and annoying to have to stop my life and wait for the power to come back on, after a while it was kind of nice to have a reason to stop and relax, to have everyone together — wrapped in blankets as the house cooled off, in the shadowy light of candles and flashlights, with nothing to do but be a family. Stories would be shared as shadows flickered, laughter would ensue, real talking would be done and bonding was happening whether we realized it or not. Our hog buyer was out one evening delivering holiday goodies when the power was out. It was a new experience entertaining him by candlelight. We hoped he didn't get the wrong idea.

When those power crews did their thing and the house lit up again, I would have to admit that I was always just a little disappointed at first. Kids scattered to resume their activities, and I was left secretly wishing we would have had more of that time together.

Someday they will understand the heart of a mother.

Stoking the fire in the wood stove to warm the house is just as important as stoking the fires of family — no matter what form it takes — and no matter what the season. There is warmth to be found in family and friends — even in those cold, dark days of winter. Especially when the power is out.

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Oahu combines big city buzz, history and rural beauty



BY GEORGE HOBICA
Tribune News Service

Although some visitors head straight for other islands when visiting Hawaii, thinking they've done and seen it all on Oahu, Hawaii's most populous island is always worth another visit. Oahu has the buzz and attractions of a major city combined with solace and scenic beauty just a short drive away.

Don't get me wrong. I love the other islands, too: Lanai and its two Four Seasons resorts, where I stayed when the properties first opened under different management 20 years ago, and recently revisited earlier this year; the Big Island with all but two of the world's climate zones and its oozing volcano; Maui, where I take any opportunity to visit sleepy Hana (Travaasa's Sea Ranch Cottages there are pure bliss); and Kauai with its waterfalls. These other islands are great for relaxing, but there's just

more to see and do on Oahu, home to Honolulu, Waikiki and some of the best scenery anywhere.

Honolulu itself is more bustling than ever, with culture, fine dining, shopping to rival Las Vegas or Rodeo Drive (the world's largest outdoor mall is here), and year-round extravaganzas such as the annual Hawaii Food and Wine Festival. Plus, it's easy to escape to some amazing beaches (nearly empty even on a weekend), hiking trails, farmers markets and other rural pursuits.

On my most recent visit I even discovered some things that I somehow missed on a dozen previous occasions.

I'm perfectly happy camping out on the lanai of an oceanfront room on Waikiki, or perhaps on the beach in a chaise under an umbrella, plunging into the calm waters from time to time to cool off (I divided my recent stay between the oceanfront Outrigger Beach Resort, the elegant Trump

Waikiki and the classic Moana Surfrider, Waikiki's first beachfront hotel). But I spent most of this trip ticking off some new things on the must-do list.

First up was the historic Iolani Palace, the last home of Hawaii's royal family. The beautifully restored building is as fascinating as the history behind it and the people who lived there. I took a guided tour with docent educator Zita Cup Choy, who proudly announced, "This place had electric lights four years before the White House got them." It's also where Hawaii's last queen resided under house arrest for several years.

Then it was off to lunch in downtown's funky Chinatown section, where The Pig & The Lady gets crowded with locals hungry for imaginative Vietnamese cuisine. The neighborhood is evolving from gritty to hip, with new restaurants, bars, shopping and entertainment, and to learn more I stopped into the Visitor Information Center (1159 Nu'uanu Avenue/808-521-2903), where they hand out free tip sheets on what to experience in the area.

But Oahu is much more than Waikiki, and one of the most popular attractions these days is the farmers market at Kapiolani Community College where 60 or so vendors set up each Saturday to sell locally grown produce, some of which you may never have seen before, and serve food (you can get there by public bus from Waikiki). I liked it because it's not one of those silly "crafts fair" farmers markets (the only T-shirts they sell support the Hawaiian Farm Bureau Federation, www.hfbf.org, the group that sponsors the market; I got one with a bright pink pig that reads "support local pigs"). A main attraction is the Ono Pops stand (<http://www.onopops.com/flavors.php>) selling local and organic popsicles with outrageous flavor combinations such as Strawberry Goat

Cheese.

And while Kauai is famous for its hiking trails, Oahu has them too. The following day I trekked the Makapuu Lighthouse trail along the Kaiwi State Scenic Shoreline, part of the Oahu State Park system. The trailhead is located off Highway 72 and it is indeed as scenic as anything I've ever seen elsewhere in Hawaii.

From there, I headed to the beach. Specifically, gorgeous and majestic Waimanalo Beach: soft sands, aqua water, and uncrowded even on a weekend. At 5.5 miles, it's the longest stretch of sandy shoreline on Oahu and one of the longest in the islands. And it's nearby Sweet Home Waimanalo (<http://sweethomewaimanalo.com/>), where the fish tacos and other local fare are alone worth the drive.

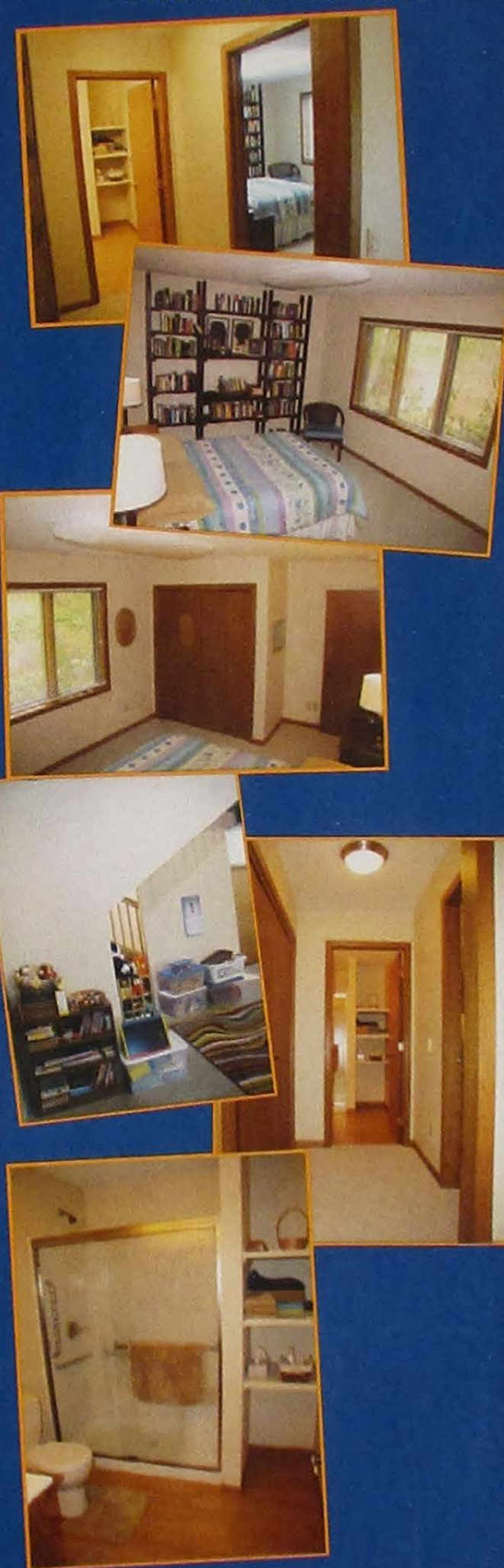
One of my favorite things to do on Oahu is to just drive around the island from top to bottom, stopping along the way wherever looks interesting. A must-stop is Haleiwa, the quintessential beach and surf town on the North Shore with boutiques, restaurants and galleries.

On my next to last day I did something I'd missed in all my visits to Honolulu, and I'm not sure why I avoided it: namely, a tour of Pearl Harbor, including its absorbing museums and the USS Arizona Memorial, a 30-minute drive from Waikiki. Maybe I stayed away because it's such an emotional place; but many visitors say it's a highlight of their trip, and I can see why. Check your pulse if you leave without a lump in your throat.

And on my final day, I did what no visitor to Waikiki should miss. I went down to the pool deck and rented a chaise and beach umbrella and spent the day swimming, catching up on my reading, people-watching, and sipping an adult beverage or two. It's perhaps the most iconic — but certainly not the only — way to spend a day on Oahu.

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Houseplant happiness

BY JAN RIGGENBACH
Contributing writer

Select a houseplant that tugs at your heartstrings. Match it up with a cool pot. Bring it into your home, and it might just change your world.

Tovah Martin hopes you will become addicted. That's what happened to her, and she wouldn't have it any other way. Author of "The Unexpected Houseplant" (Timber Press, 2012, \$22.95), she has packed every nook and cranny of her

Connecticut home with plants. An avid outdoor gardener in summer, she confesses she couldn't survive the winter without this intimate indoor connection to nature.

I thought I had a fair number of houseplants myself, until I read about Tovah's 300 plus specimens. They include vining plants like the jasmine that reaches out to grab the nearest furniture, tiny plants sized just right to fit small pockets of space, and ground-cover plants to mask bare soil showing around the bare stems of large woody plants. "It's living The Secret Garden indoors on a daily basis," she writes.

Rattlesnake plant (*Calathea lancifolia*) looks exotic but makes an easy-to-grow houseplant. Photo by Timber Press

Money Decisions

January is a time many of us start to think about changes we would like to make in our lives. There are two areas of our lives that are most often cited for changes:

- Money habits
- Food/Exercise habits

It seems during the Holidays many of us spend and eat in excess. I think about these two areas of my life every year as I begin the New Year.

Maybe this is the year to expand the focus; I read articles, see television specials and hear personal conversations about the state of our children and young people; too often the focus is poor eating habits, too little exercise and the need for financial education.

I think there may be a benefit to us and our children if we include them in our plans for a healthier financial and physical life.

Financial habits are my expertise so here are money ideas to use with the children and young people in your life.

Teach money choices sooner rather than later

Even a 3-year-old can learn to make choices. Your library can be one of the first lessons in choice. Determine the number of books that you can check out and let your child choose that many books. This isn't to

create a feeling of deficit, it is a lesson in choices.

At the grocery store the choice can be one special treat. Children or young adults don't magically learn to make choices; they must have experiences that begin at a young age and continue as they approach independent living. Start

young, but know it is never too late to begin to teach good money habits.

The real lesson ... we all have to make money choices

Where does money come from?

Most small children think money comes from an ATM or a credit card. By 4 or 5 most children know that one or both parents have a job. This is a good time to explain the whole concept about we go to work, receive a paycheck, put the paycheck in the bank and then there is money in the bank to use the ATM or money to pay the bills that are necessary to live...including the credit card bill.

The real lesson ... money doesn't just appear, it is earned.

Give them real money experience

By the time a child is 5 or 6 they are capable of making small decisions

about their spending. Let them "earn" an allowance. Your child will know that they need to "do something" to earn the money they can spend or save.

An effective allowance:

- Is based on the amount of responsibility necessary to earn that allowance.

- Comes with your expectations of how the money can be used

- Has a required savings

- Has a component for giving to charities

As your child gets older the amount of responsibility and money should increase.

With an older child you can share your money management decisions and choices. There is no better way to evaluate your own money behavior than sharing and teaching a child or young person.

The real lesson ... As parents, you can teach responsible money habits.

Teach a child sound money habits and you may improve your own money habits...Because life is more than money.

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Spring & Summer trends

Braids are still in but with variations so they look new. Braids can be on different parts of the head and not using all the space on the head. They can even be faux hair that is so huge it might remind you of the cat in Alice in Wonderland all fluffy and extended down and off the shoulder. Or a braid can simply be added to any updo like a crown.

So it's winter and New York is already talking spring/summer trends.

Well yes, and that gives us hope that winter will end and inspiration about the future to come.

Here's what's up in hair for 2015 spring/summer looks thanks to Modern Salon Magazine, a professional journal for hairdressers.

Minimalism was the key work at Mercedes Benz Fashion Week New York.

The "bun" is back as a chignon based at the nape of the neck. Or as a thick braid turned into a bun and placed high or low. Or just like the ballerina bun you wore as a child.

Braids are still in but with variations so they look new. Braids can be on different parts of the head and not using all the space on the head. They can even be faux hair that is so huge it might remind you of the cat in Alice in Wonderland all fluffy and extended down and off the shoulder. Or a braid can simply be added to any updo like a crown.

For men there are classic neat looks messed up to look cool.

And then hair that looks slept on but ruffled by fingers to turn rugged. All the men's looks were

short and facial hair was not present. The longest look was length on top in waves and curls but very masculine.

Textured looks for gals included a skull cap in a bright color that covered the head but allowed lots of big wavy

hair to flow from under it creating almost a cape of hair the longer the better. Asymmetrical looks in longer hair with curls and waves. For the most part the hair was beautiful and very street worthy.

Something akin to the greaser of the fifties was used on female models slicked back long hair with very little style that accentuated classically beautiful faces. Makeup was minimal as well.

Winter Pick Me Ups

If spring/summer looks are too far off for you, consider what you can do in Iowa in winter to feel great and not to be locked indoors all the time.

There are still a few holiday parties left to attend. How

about a fresh look from your favorite hairstylist to look fresh and gorgeous? Take a photo from a magazine; your stylist actually likes that to help communicate.

Skin dry and pale? Facials can remove layers of dead skin and perk up the skin tone. Estheticians love to send you out looking naturally beautiful but can finish your look with makeup.

Microdermabrasion treatments will bring your skin's freshness back. Don't hibernate; microderm.

And gone are the days of waiting for nails on your hands and feet to dry. Gel nails are instantly dry and beautiful.

Pedicures are not just for summer feet. How sad if your calluses are allowed to develop just because it isn't sandal season. Many winter dress up looks have open footwear so keep those feet in shape year round.

Finally, as this issue comes out many of the holiday packages will be on final sale at the salon so grab what you may have put off. It's great for gifting yourself or having gifts ready for anytime during the year.



MARY CLARE
LOKKEN

Perhaps the biggest surprise to me was that Tovah's indoor plants include hardy plants that are perfectly capable of surviving winter outdoors. Perennials such as hen and chicks, for example, which Tovah says are the easiest houseplants on earth. And small potted evergreens such as junipers. I prefer to enjoy these hardy plants outdoors and save my indoor space for tender plants that really need the heat. But I am thinking of borrowing her idea of growing marginally hardy evergreens such as smooth cypress indoors, so I can get to know some plants that would never survive a Midwest winter.

The book's subtitle is "220 Extraordinary Choices for Every Spot in Your Home." The choices include blooming South African bulbs, calla lilies, bromeliads, begonias, fuchsias, and carnivorous plants, to name a few. There are plants with colorful foliage, such as peacock plant and never-never plant.

There are a few ivies, which Tovah gives the

"congeniality prize."

Although not particularly exotic, they're versatile and accommodating. And she includes ferns, which she uses to provide an oasis of green between her many flowering plants.

There are also grasses such as blue fescue, grown primarily for Tovah's cat, and grass-like plants such as umbrella papyrus, which thrives in the wet soil of a pot that has no drainage hole.

Tovah writes that she never brings a mixed outdoor container inside as a whole unit. That's because not all the plants are equally suited to indoor living, and sometimes the stronger one that survives doesn't happen to be her favorite.

Finding new inspiration from Kindra Clin-eff's photos of Tovah's plant collection, I've been eyeing the shabby pots that hold some of my own indoor plants. Some will have to go.

Select a
houseplant
that tugs at your
heartstrings.
Match it up
with a cool pot.
Bring it
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Chicken piccata

CHICKEN PICCATA CAN BE PLATED OVER SPAGHETTI FOR AN EASY WEEKNIGHT MEAL. PHOTO BY AL DIAZ/MIAMI HERALD/TNS

BY LINDA GASSENHEIMER
Tribune News Service

Here is a quick version of an Italian classic, chicken with a white wine, lemon and caper sauce. Using thin chicken cutlets cuts the cooking time.

The thin cutlets take about 2 minutes per side to cook. To keep the thin cutlets juicy, try not to overcook the chicken. It will continue to cook slightly when removed from the heat. A meat thermometer should read 165 degrees.

WINE

Fred Tasker's wine suggestion: This tangy dish would go nicely with a zingy sauvignon blanc.

HELPFUL HINTS

- Boneless chicken breasts can be used instead of cutlets. Pound them flat to about 1/2-inch thick.
- Any type of pasta can be used instead of the spaghetti.

COUNTDOWN

- Boil water for pasta.
- Make chicken.
- Cook pasta.

SHOPPING LIST

To buy: 3/4 pound chicken cutlets (about 1/2-inch thick), 1 package sliced mushrooms, 1 lemon, 1 bottle dry white wine, 1 bottle capers, 1 package whole wheat spaghetti and 1 bunch parsley (optional).

Staples: Olive oil, cornstarch, minced garlic, salt and black peppercorns.

MAIN DISH:

Chicken piccata

2 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch, divided
 1/2 cup water plus 3 tablespoons water
 Salt and freshly ground black pepper
 3/4 pound chicken cutlets (about 1/2-inch thick)
 2 teaspoons olive oil
 1 cup sliced mushrooms
 1 teaspoon minced garlic
 1/2 cup dry white wine
 2 tablespoons lemon juice
 2 tablespoons drained capers
 2 tablespoons chopped parsley (optional)

Mix 1/2 tablespoon cornstarch with the 3 tablespoons water and set aside. Place remaining 2 tablespoons cornstarch on a plate and sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Add chicken and roll in the cornstarch making sure all sides are coated. Heat oil in a nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and brown 2 minutes per side. A meat thermometer should read 165 degrees. Transfer to a plate and add the mushrooms and garlic to the skillet. Saute 2 minutes or until mushrooms are soft. Spoon mushrooms over chicken. Add the white wine to the skillet, scraping up the brown bits in the bottom of the skillet. Add

the remaining 1/2 cup water. Bring to a boil and cook 2 minutes. Stir the cornstarch and water and add to the skillet. Cook, stirring constantly, until the sauce is thickened, about 3 minutes. Add the lemon juice, capers and parsley (if using) to the sauce and spoon over the chicken. Serve the chicken over the spaghetti. Makes 2 servings.

Per serving: 341 calories (24 percent from fat), 9.2 g fat (1.6 g saturated, 4.5 g monounsaturated), 126 mg cholesterol, 40 g protein, 12.7 g carbohydrates, 1 g fiber, 325 mg sodium.
 Source: Linda Gassenheimer.

SIDE DISH:

Spaghetti

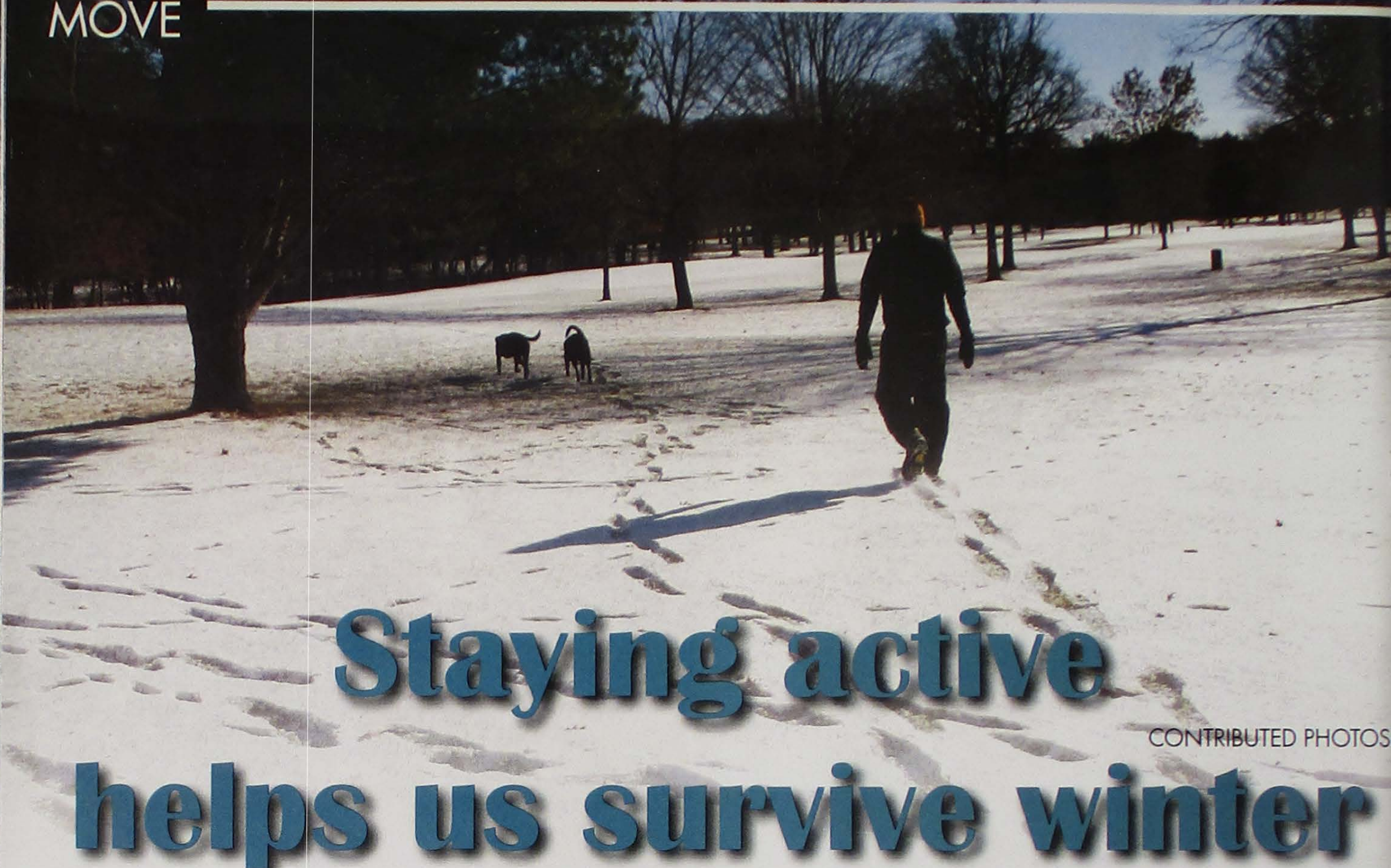
1/4 pound whole-wheat spaghetti
 1 teaspoon olive oil
 Salt and freshly ground black pepper
 Bring a large saucepan filled

with water to a boil. Add the spaghetti and boil 8 to 10 minutes or until the spaghetti is tender but still firm. Remove 2 tablespoons of the cooking water to a bowl. Add the olive oil and mix

well. Drain the spaghetti and add to the bowl. Add salt and pepper to taste. Toss well. Makes 2 servings.

Per serving: 231 calories (12 percent from fat), 3.1 g fat (0.5 g saturated, 1.7 g monounsaturated), no cholesterol, 7.4 g protein, 42.6 g carbohydrates, 1.8 g fiber, 3 mg sodium.

Linda Gassenheimer is the author, most recently, of "Simply Smoothies: Fresh & Fast Diabetes-Friendly Snacks & Complete Meals" and "Fast and Flavorful: Great Diabetes Meals from Market to Table" and "The Flavors of the Florida Keys." Her website is dinnerinminutes.com. Follow her on Twitter @lgassenheimer. Email: linda@dinnerinminutes.com.



Staying active helps us survive winter

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

KECIA PLACE-FENCL
Contributing writer

We have passed the winter solstice, and the daylight hours are getting longer. However, we still have many long days and nights of winter to endure before we hear the songbirds of spring. It is typical for us to go into hibernation mode during these long periods of winter.

Seasonal affective disorder has been diagnosed in many patients where people struggle with the lack of daylight, the cold and the snowy weather. Instead of curling up and riding out the season, I challenge you to exercise, or at the very least, get moving. Exercise releases endorphins that can improve your mood, making

you happier and more relaxed.

Try a new activity this winter. Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing are two great activities that you can do outdoors in the fresh air. Group fitness classes are another great option as other people may help hold you accountable, forcing you to attend and not skip out on exercise. Sign up for an indoor triathlon and train at a local gym for the swim, bike and run portions of the event. Participate in a recreational sports league such as indoor volleyball or basketball.

Think about incorporating warm, tropical activities into your daily routine. Some possibilities might be to try a hot yoga class, go to the swimming pool to swim laps, water walk, attend an aqua aerobics class, or play in the pool with family and friends.



Even at home, exercise and movement is a possibility. Exercising during the commercial of your favorite television show or sporting event will burn calories. Doing push-ups, sit-ups, squats, lunges, or tricep dips on a sturdy table during the commercials will keep you moving!

If you struggle with independent activity, ask a friend, neighbor or colleague to help you get out the door. Dogs are great motivators for leaving the house; most dogs love walks, even when the weather may be less than desirable. Don't have a dog? Ask your neighbor if you can borrow theirs.

January is the time of year when New Year Resolutions come out of the woodwork. A resolution or goal must be attainable. Making sure you pick a resolution that's sustainable will also help you make the resolution become a part of your lifestyle and make it more enjoyable.

Fitness can fit into all of our lives, whatever the season. It's important to pick something we enjoy and can maintain. As we plow through the days of winter, let us keep motivated, strong and hopeful for the promise of spring!

Top food trends for 2015

A new year will soon be upon us, and, as always, some new food trends will emerge. Kale and quinoa, the “it” foods of 2014, will remain popular, and several new items are also attracting chefs’ attention. These top food trends for 2015 indicate that people’s palates are continuing to evolve, and we are craving new adventurous foods and flavors that still meet our demands for balanced nutrition. Start watching for:

More smoked items

The demand for smoked foods has risen as chefs have begun to apply smoke to a variety of proteins, as well as alternatives like vegetables, butters, spices, beers and cocktails.

More fermented foods

The popularity of preserving foods by fermentation will continue to rise. You will begin to notice foods like yogurt, tempeh, sauerkraut, kimchi, kombucha and kefir on menus, as well as in people’s kitchens, with the growing awareness of digestive health. These foods contain live cultures (or are preserved in liquid) to convert sugars and starches into bacteria-boosting agents.

Local grains

While locally grown fruits and

vegetables remain in high demand, the “next level of local” will be locally sourced grains. Expect more farmers to grow small-scale grain varieties and sell them to local bakers, chefs, brewers and consumers.

Ugly, misshapen fruits and vegetables

Consumers are becoming more aware that imperfect-looking produce still tastes great. Produce with an appearance that previously would have been relegated to compost will instead be marketed and sold.

Coconut sugar

The new “it” sweetener, this sugar (from the sap in the flowers of coconut plants) has the same amount of calories as regular sugar. Coconut sugar is minimally processed, is claimed to be more sustainable, and is perceived to be healthier than table sugar. For example, compared with table and brown sugars, coconut sugar also contains nutrients like zinc and iron, as well as antioxidants. Coconut sugar also contains good amounts of inulin, a type of dietary fiber that acts as a prebiotic that feeds the good bacteria in your gut.

Matcha

Expect more products with Japanese

Matcha, a powdered, bright green tea that is packed with insoluble fiber and antioxidants. Matcha contains less caffeine than traditional green tea, but it still provides an energy boost. As opposed to most teas, Matcha is sold as a fine powder that contains the entire tea leaf and thereby maximizes release of the tea’s nutrients; teas that are steeped in hot water have many of their nutrients left behind in the tea bag.

Nutrition apps

We are no longer relying on just the nutritional information on packaging to know what is in our food. Smartphone apps, such as Fooducate, can give additional and more accurate information, and people are increasingly using these apps to make food selections. In addition, innovative devices like Prep Pad pair with an iPad app to calculate the exact nutrition content of your planned meals, including carbohydrates, fats, protein and calories, by scanning the bar code of food packages.

The information is not intended as medical advice. Please consult a medical professional for individual advice.

Nicole Arnold represents Hy-Vee as a nutrition expert working throughout the community to promote healthy eating and nutrition. Nicole is a Registered and Licensed Dietitian, ACE certified personal trainer and member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Name: Margo Niemeyer

Age: 25

Position: Facets Editor and copy editor/page designer at the Ames Tribune.

Family: I have a younger sister who is currently working on her Peace Corps application. My parents live in Brookings, South Dakota. My dad is a flooring installer and my mom is a civil engineer. We have a spunky black lab and a drama queen disguised as a dachshund. We also have three quarter horses who think they are the best consultants on how to build a fence, they even offer to show you how it is done.



What would you do with \$1,000 to spend on yourself?

I would pay off student loans. A boring, non frivolous thing but so satisfying.

Your favorite meal:

Top sirloin steak (medium-rare) loaded with mushrooms accompanied by a cup of either Wisconsin Cheese or French Onion soup and steak fires.

I never leave home without:

Some way to pay for things cash/check/card.

Your favorite motto:

Love is all you need.

What makes you happy?

Spending time with people I care about and not having to rush away for other plans.

What makes you feel confident?

I feel most confident when someone makes it a point to come find me and tell me they like my work. It brightens up my day and reminds me that I am good at what I do. That is so helpful and uplifting when I am stressed about a project in my personal life or at work.

What have you accomplished that has made you proud?

I graduated college and got my 'big-kid job.' That is a huge milestone in my life. Knowing that I can fall back on my parents when I need to, but that I am an independent woman with her own income, paying her own bills is a great feeling.

How do you take care of yourself financially?

I pay rent and student loans first. When I shop for groceries I do my best to not buy junk food. If I am buying junk food I end up spending more money than necessary. Other than those two

things I just watch what I am spending my money on.

Best tip to look and feel great:

Wear clothing that fits. If I'm not comfortable in my clothes I will be uncomfortable all day.

If you could do or be anything you want, what would it be?

I like who I am and where I am at in my life, but there are so many things I want to do in life. If I could do anything, my first pick would be to travel the world. Take it all in.

If you knew then what you know now, what would you have done differently?

I would have taken more chances. I don't regret anything in my life, but there are so many experiences I have been hesitant to let myself have. I have been saving them for a rainy day. That rainy day is now. Let yourself live!

How do you reward yourself?

There are so many ways I reward myself. My most favorites are: naps, ice cream, going to a movie, or going for a long drive.

I crave:

I crave food at this time of year. The list is as follows: My grandma's homemade pickles are very close to the top of the list. My cousins and I fight over pickles at Thanksgiving

and Christmas meals. My other grandma's cranberry salad. Her recipe is the best, in my opinion. And last, but not least, is my cousin's grandma's lefse. Homemade lefse is second to none.

I am thankful for:

All of the people that are in my life. Sometimes I take for granted the friends and family that I continually run to or fall back on when things get hard because I know they will always be there for me. Those people are the most precious gems we have in our lives.

Favorite wardrobe staple:

Dark jeans that fit perfectly and a pair of black high heels.

My simplest pleasure:

Eating ice cream while sitting on the kitchen floor in my favorite sweats.

What financial advice would you give other women?

When taking out a loan for school, a car, a house or whatever it is, have a plan to pay it off as soon as possible. Make payments larger than the monthly minimum.

When I am an old lady:

I will be sitting on my wrap-around porch sipping on freshly sun-brewed tea while soaking up the warmth of the summer.

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Nicole Arnold, RD, LD
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narnold@hy-vee.com
3800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50014



Lincoln Center Dietitian
Amy Clark, RD, LD
515-450-0508
aclark@hy-vee.com
640 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

